

CHAPTER 5 - WASHINGTON, DC

TRANSPORTATION/SIGHTSEEING/DINING/OTHER

In addition to all of the great information in this chapter on the DC Area, the 2002-2003 Class has identified what we see to be the best of DC, and the worst of DC. We also included recommendations from past classes, so the following sections should give you more ideas for things to do than you can even think about during your year. We hope it can help in some of your choices, and make your choices fun.

TRANSPORTATION

Planes, Trains and Automobiles: How Transportation Works In The DC Metro Area

Good maps of Washington, DC and the suburbs are a must. Check with AAA or bookstores in your area or pick up one during Orientation to help you locate potential housing. You will want to keep the detailed ADC maps in the car (easy to pick up at a convenience store or they have these at Costco for a significant discount), a DC 50-mile radius map in the apartment, and a Fastmap of DC at work. Study a map so you understand the logical layout of the city. (Remember from your fourth grade history that DC was a planned city.) Basically, DC is a grid divided into quadrants (minus the part on the other side of the Potomac River, which DC gave back to Virginia) labeled NW, NE, SE, and SW. Starting at the Capitol, streets running north and south are numbered; those running east and west are labeled with letters (minus J, X, and Z). Addresses need to include the quadrant label. Diagonal avenues are named for States. After the alphabet is a set of two-syllable names running in alphabetical order, then three-syllable names. You might find a few inconsistencies though, so consult your map until you know your way around. Also, note that not all streets are continuous, and many are one-way. Whenever a diagonal crosses the grid, things get interesting. Some of the intersections are handled with traffic circles, which can be tricky the first time or two, but aren't too bad if you know which lane you need to use. Keep in mind that you can keep going around the circle if you miss your turn! Be cognizant that the traffic signal lights are generally not hanging overhead within the city – many a person has gotten a ticket (or near accident) for running a red light they didn't notice because the light was on a pole on the side of the street. Also, there are a number of red-light cameras for which there is a hefty fine.

Getting Around By Car

If you must bring your car to DC, it will cost you. Registering a car in DC requires paying 7% of the car's value plus a nominal fee. Virginia and Maryland are a bit more reasonable. If you live in DC, another alternative is to get a "reciprocity

sticker". It costs \$135 and lasts for one year. It allows you to keep your car registered in your home state (where insurance is certainly cheaper!). It also acts as a parking sticker allowing you to park for an unlimited amount of time in the Zone that you live in. DC is divided into a number of parking zones.

Without a parking sticker, you are generally limited to two hours of parking at a time. There are very few streets that don't require stickers but they are extremely rare! Many apartments, but not all, charge extra (a lot) to provide you with a private parking space, so be sure to ask.

Parking tickets are a major source of revenue for the city of Washington; you see a lot of them fluttering under windshield wipers. Read the signs and check the parking meters, especially on Saturdays! And just because you move your car after the 2-hour limit, don't assume you won't get a ticket. The limit is usually for the entire area, not just that particular space, for a 24-hour period. Pay special attention to the fine print concerning rush hour parking. Most downtown streets and major thoroughfares have parking restrictions between 7:00-9:30 AM and 4:00-6:30 PM. If you violate these hours your car will be towed! Illegal left turns are especially lucrative violations, so pay close attention to traffic signs if you choose to drive in Washington/Georgetown. Similarly, many areas also forbid right turns on red. Stay alert and read the signs. The law allows you to park at least 5 feet from a driveway. So don't park too close. Also, watch the signs for lanes usable only by High Occupancy Vehicles (HOV). I-66, I-95, and various other places require a certain number of people in the car if you use the special lanes. The Metro or taxis are reasonable ways to get around. Taxis in the District are not well regulated, so be prepared to give your taxi driver explicit instructions or pantomime them. Taxi fares are based on a zone map instead of meters. And don't forget the quadrant when you give the driver your destination.

If you live close to a Metro stop, you can certainly get by without a car. Besides, parking can be challenging as well as expensive. Virtually everything that you need is Metro accessible with the biggest inconvenience being the cab home from the grocery store. Also, rental cars can be found as cheap as \$20/day to afford an occasional weekend getaway.

Airport Access

There are 3 airports that serve the DC area including Washington National (DCA), Washing-Dulles (IAD), and Baltimore/Washington (BWI). Depending on where you live and if you bring a car, each airport has its advantages. Washington National (which is located in Virginia just outside of southwest DC) has its own Metro stop (Yellow line) and therefore is most convenient if you live close to the Metro. Washington-Dulles (which is located in northern Virginia) while it does not have its own Metro stop, can be easily accessed from the Metro with a ~ 45 minute \$2.00 bus ride from the Rosslyn Metro stop or take the Orange line to the West Falls Church station and transfer to the connecting

Washington Flyer bus (\$8.00 bus fare). A cab to Washinton-Dulles is ~ \$50.00. Baltimore/Washington airport is the furthest from DC (and as it name says is located in Baltimore Maryland) and although you can get there by taking a ~ 45 minute \$2.00 bus from the Greenbelt Metro (east end of the Green line) or a \$5.00 train from Union Station M-F, it is probably best accessed by car or using Super Shuttle ~\$23.00. The biggest advantage to using Balt/Wash is the cheap airfares, which frequently out weigh the inconvenience of getting there.

Traffic Information on the Web

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/metro/traffic/index.html>

<http://www.smartraveler.com/scripts/wdcmmap.asp?city=wdc&cityname=Washingt on, DC>

Public Transportation Options

The Metro is safe, clean, and reliable transportation. Use <http://www.wmata.com/> to map and time your route using both Metrorail and Metrobus. In a previous chapter: We recommend finding a place to live within walking distance of a Metro stop. Bus service is pretty good too, though you need exact change. Pick up a Metro map and appropriate bus schedules from a local Metro station. If your local Metro station doesn't have the schedules you need, check at the Metro Center Station.

In addition to Metrobus, shuttle buses make runs through Georgetown between the Rosslyn and Dupont Circle Metro stations, and on a loop up Wisconsin Avenue from the Foggy Bottom Metro station (50 cents, or 25 cents with a Metro bus transfer).

The DC dress code accepts running shoes and socks as standard Metro footwear. Reading material is a good idea on a commute as long as you don't infringe on another passenger's space with wide-open newspapers. Silence is golden. In inclement weather you will see an odd, if practical, assortment of hats and boots on both men and women. You'll probably need a briefcase or tote bag; not for papers, but to hold shoes, books, lunches, scarves. The escalator etiquette is stand on the right, but walk on the left. Standing on the left invites getting trampled. Metro etiquette includes, letting all riders off of the train prior to entering the train, and, if seats are limited, not putting your stuff on the seat next to you. In addition, when your stop is coming up next, you may want to start working your way to the doors at the stop prior to your stop to avoid getting run over or trapped. A practical hint: during rush hour, cars at the front of the trains tend to be less crowded than those in the rear.

Virginia and Maryland both have commuter train systems that are becoming very popular for those who prefer to live in “the burbs”. The Virginia Railway Express (VRE) (<http://www.vre.org/>) has trains from Fredericksburg, Manassas, Woodbridge, and Burke that can allow you to live in the more distant, but slower-moving suburbs.

There is a VRE stop about 5 blocks from Headquarters. The MARC trains (http://www.mtmaryland.com/schedules/marc/marc_schedule.cfm) cover a good portion of commutable Maryland in all directions, and serves the same type of suburban community. The trains hook up at Metro stops (Union Station), and allow for a less-frustrating commute than the typical stop and go drive. The MARC trains will also carry you between Baltimore-Washington International Airport and Union Station on weekdays.

The Virginia suburbs also have an amazing, unofficial, but very efficient and flexible carpool system called “slugging”. Slugs are people who park and wait for a ride in a known commuting area. Drivers go to these sites to pick up additional passengers so that all may commute much more quickly to work using the car-pool lanes (HOV – High Occupancy Vehicle). Both parties benefit with no formal carpool arrangements, and the corresponding lack of flexibility has to be made. Some estimate that without this “system”, Washington traffic would come to an immediate standstill during rush hour. Hmm, we thought it already had! A few good sites to guide you as either a driver or a slug <http://www.slug-lines.com/>, <http://www.slugvirginia.com/>.

A comprehensive guide to DC area transportation can be found at <http://dc.about.com/cs/transportation1/>

Human-Powered Transportation/Recreation

Definitely bring your running/walking shoes and bike to DC. The trails are great for sightseeing, recreation, training, and transportation. There are several trail books/maps available at local bookstores such as Short Bike Rides In and Around Washington, DC by Michael Leccese. It has trail route, access, length, difficulty, and scenic/historic information.

There is a great bike-trail system as part of the rails-to-trails effort in the DC area. Two local bike clubs you may want to contact and join are DC Road Runners Club (703) 241-0395 and Potomac Peddlers (202) 363-8687. See the back portion of the Post’s Friday Weekend section for list of races and other sporting events in the DC area.

Worst Places to Park

- Adams Morgan on a weekend night. Go ahead and dine somewhere that they have valet parking and pay for it. There are no real pay lots and street parking could take you hours to find.
- Georgetown: At least there are some pay lots, but pay, you will. With the repair work on M Street NW, even driving is all but impossible.
- Old Town Alexandria

Worst Areas to Try and Reach with Public Transportation

- North Georgetown: It's a long walk from any metro stop and buses can be confusing (or trapped by the rest of the traffic in the old, narrow streets).
- Adams Morgan: A hike from any metro stop.

SIGHTSEEING

Suggestions And Tips For Touring In And Around The DC Area

Invest in a good guidebook to Washington, such as Frommer's, Michelin Green Guide, or DC Access. A trip to the Washington Visitor Information Center at 1455 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW will yield free guides to attractions, tours, and dining in DC. Also, stop by the Virginia Division of Tourism at 1629 K St., NW or stop at one of the Virginia Tourist Information Centers on the Interstates (I-66 near Manassas is the closest). Don't forget AAA books if you are a member. You might also pickup the Weekender's Guide at a local bookstore. The <http://www.dc.about.com/> website has a good comparison listing of guidebooks and maps of DC. Washington, DC: Off the Beaten Path by William B. Whitman covers the smaller and less-obvious things to see in the District. (You may want to double-check its information before you go – although it was published in 2001, I have noticed several things that have changed or no longer exist.) One unique possibility for those who love their canines - The Dog Lover's Companion to Washington, D. C. & Baltimore by Don and Peggy Oldenburg. It is a tour book for those who like to take their pooch along for the ride and includes a listing of local dog parks.

Good sites from which to start:

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/travel/visitorsguide.htm>

Official Department of Tourism Web sites:

<http://www.washington.org/>

<http://www.mdifun.org/>

<http://www.virginia.org>

At these official sites, the states offer nice glossy magazines for free, which can help guide you to good weekend activities and fun. In order to plan your evening and weekend activities, check local publications. The Washingtonian magazine contains a wealth of information about good restaurants and clubs, special

shopping areas, and cultural and social events taking place in the vicinity. It is worth the yearly subscription to this well-done magazine, but you can also discover the on-line version, which provides the major worthwhile features of the magazine such as the yearly 100 Best Restaurant Guide or Best Bargain Restaurant Guide. It also has a list of "Where to get (fill in the blank)". Use the site at <http://www.washingtonian.com/>. The Washington Post is an absolutely essential reference. The Friday edition contains the Weekend magazine, which previews upcoming events, museums, movies, nightclubs, theater, and sightseeing in the country. (The Washington Times has a similar section in the Thursday edition, if you are of a more conservative bent.) The Post's Sunday's travel section often includes ideas for day trips or long-weekend trips. And Sunday's magazine includes at least one restaurant review and occasionally a dining guide. Then of course, there are the daily listings of movies, plays, and concerts. The news and events in the District, especially the nightlife, are covered in the City Paper. The City Paper is a free paper in news racks around town. It is available every Thursday and goes quickly, so get one while they last. The Recreation News is a monthly paper with a very extensive list of sports activities, trips, etc., for the surrounding area.

A word to the wise: Downtown Washington is very popular with tourists during the summer until after Labor Day and at Christmas holidays. School tour groups flood the town beginning in April (avoid the Smithsonian Metro stop!). These are ideal times to explore the surrounding countryside. Visit the Smithsonian museums beginning in mid-September when the exhibits are not crowded and your feet and ankles are safe from baby strollers. If you do decide to venture into a popular tourist attraction, be there when it opens. This sounds like a sacrilege on Saturday morning, but one or two hours can make a big difference in crowd density.

There are several tour operators around Washington, which offer a good overview of the sights. Recommend the following to your out-of-town visitors if you are unable or unwilling to sacrifice your per diem to take leave to show them around.

- Old Town Trolley <http://www.trolleytours.com/>,
- Tourmobile <http://www.tourmobile.com/>, or
- DC Ducks <http://www.historictours.com/washington/Reservations.htm>

They'll get a better guided tour of the city than you would be able to give them, and they will have minimal hassle in the meantime. (DC streets are unfriendly to the un-anointed and the signage is awful.) You can get on and off at any point on the tour and pick up the next trolley when you are ready. The guides offer information on places of interest around Washington. Local businesses and their Web site sometimes offer discounts. It can also be fun to get one of the local limousine companies to take you "monument hopping" at night.

One final tip that will save you a lot of money is to purchase an Entertainment coupon book. You may have seen these in other cities as well. It is full of coupons (mostly buy one get one free or 50% off) for eating establishments ranging from McDonalds to excellent gourmet restaurants. In addition there are major discounts on dry cleaning, videos, florists, movie tickets, concert tickets, sporting events, etc. It only costs \$35.00 and can be purchased starting around November in CVS Pharmacies and other locations or for \$40.00 by calling 1 (800) 374-4464. The coupons are valid for an entire year. There is a version for DC and Northern Virginia and a version for DC and southern Maryland.

Sights To See In Washington

DC is a real tourist town. The great thing is that there are so many free museums and attractions. Although the museums close down with the sun, the monuments and memorials are fun to visit in the evening. The Smithsonian Institution (<http://www.si.edu/>) certainly deserves its reputation as the "Nation's Attic". The Smithsonian administration is housed in the historic "Castle Building" on the Mall. However, the Smithsonian consists of a number of museums located in downtown DC and beyond. It includes: the National Air and Space Museum, National Museum of Natural History, National Museum of American Art (closed for renovation), National Museum of American History, Arts and Industries Building, National Portrait Gallery (closed for renovation), Renwick Gallery, Hirshhorn Museum of Modern Art, Freer Gallery of Art, Arthur M. Sackler Gallery of Asian Art, National Postal Museum, National Museum of African Art, and the Anacostia Museum. The National Air and Space Museum's Stephen F. Udvar-Hazy Center will open near Dulles in December, 2003 and the National Museum of the American Indian is set to open in 2004. The National Gallery of Art (<http://www.nga.gov/>) is also located on the Mall but is separate from the Smithsonian. All are free and most have guided tours. Be sure and check out the IMAX films at the Air and Space Museum. Please note that post-September 11, the rules and times (and even the tours themselves) for various locations (e.g. Pentagon, White House) have changed, and that further changes can happen depending on the changing threat level. Keep up to date on the latest before you make plans.

Our recommendation is to get a good guidebook, read the Post, and be open to serendipity. There is so much to see and do in and around Washington, and most don't get a chance to see it! Take advantage!

Some of the favorite sights of the 2002-2003 Class include:

- Jefferson Memorial (at night)
- Lincoln Memorial (at night)

- National Zoo: An absolute must see and do. If nothing else, this is a beautiful walk. The Pandas are a must and the baby elephant is a very special new addition. If you have kids, join Friends of the National Zoo (FONZ) which has many benefits, the best of which is the ability to get tickets to “Boo at the Zoo” which is a Halloween trick or treating event the kids LOVE. Much better than regular trick or treating!
- Old Smithsonian “castle” building – a good start for a day of sightseeing. Also check out the Enid A. Haupt Garden and the pink granite “zen” garden behind the Castle.
- The National Cathedral: Located in a beautiful section of NW DC close to many embassies and the Vice-President’s home: <http://www.cathedral.org/cathedral/index.shtml>. The cathedral is beautiful and worth the visit. A beautiful view of Washington. One of the world's great cathedrals - fifth largest in the world. Built in Gothic style with modern flourishes. Various tours, including one of the gargoyles (one of the gargoyles is Darth Vader from Star Wars!). There is also a “tea and tour” of the cathedral. Kids would enjoy the brass-rubbing pictures you can make, and there are many such programs for kids. The large rose window has a moon rock in the center. President Wilson and Helen Keller are entombed here.
- National Gallery of Art Sculpture Garden: Across 7th Street NW from the National Gallery of Art. The Pavilion Café serves light meals and drinks (beer and wine). Friday happy hour jazz concerts in the summer (May-Sept); ice skating and Wednesday/Thursday jazz concerts in the winter.
- Top of the Washington Monument on a clear day. Oh, the view!

Highly Recommended Activities

A few notes from a native Washingtonian with a true passion for the city for you to peruse:

- Go to the big Virginia Wine Festival <http://showsinc.com/vawf/> located at Great Meadow in The Plains, VA (a lot of movie stars including Robert Duvall have farms in this area because it is very beautiful countryside in rolling foothills not quite yet at the mountains). There is usually one the first weekend in June (Vintage Virginia) and one in mid-August. On a drive out here on the back roads (about an hour from downtown, depending upon traffic on 66) you'll see a lot of cattle and horse farms (to include some very gorgeous and grand\$\$\$ in Middleburg). Anyway, this festival is the big wine festival of the year for Virginia growers and has a great turnout. All of the wineries come, and Virginia wine, formerly not the best, is starting to mature and come into its own as a true contender. Some unusual blends and

grapes, including Cabernet Franc grow well in the Virginia climate and soils, and a lot of the vineyards are either hiring French or European winemakers or are training in Europe, so the quality is getting to be quite good.

- Wolf Trap <http://www.wolf-trap.org/> is a great music venue, which is also, a national park (for the performing arts). This is a great summer tradition in the area. If you get lawn tickets, bring a picnic and a blanket and sit under the stars.

Unlike almost everywhere else in conservative Virginia, you can bring your own wine/beer/etc. to enjoy with your picnic (or Oasis Vineyards has wine for sale for about \$18/bottle). If you bring a lawn chair you have to sit in the back of the lawn, so it may not be worth it if you want to see anything. They have a great line-up with lots of variety. The National Symphony concerts there are very enjoyable, as are the name acts. Get there when the gates open (1.5 hours before the show) if you want a good spot on the lawn.

If you have tickets in the pavilion, you can't sit in them until 1/2 hour before the show, so bring a picnic and rough-it with the lawn seat folks until they let you in. (But take your picnic basket back to your car if you have a nice one - mine was stolen a few years ago trying to leave it outside the pavilion - surprising because Wolf Trap generally attracts a nice crowd). The Barns at Wolf Trap starts having some shows when the weather turns and usually the bands are up-and-coming.

- Bike DC <http://www.waba.org/> in the fall (September, last year) is a fabulous opportunity to ride either a 20- or 32-mile tour of the city WITHOUT CARS! [And for those of you that aren't going -- avoid downtown that morning as they'll block everything off and traffic will be miserable]. This is a great experience and worth the sore muscles. I did it several years ago and it gives you a unique perspective of the city that you would never get in a car/tourmobile/long walk. Remember, DC has hills, so it's not a completely easy ride, but it's not bad. If you can't make that, the GW Parkway trails and W&OD paved trails are a nice ride, and the C&O canal trail is beautiful IF you have a mountain or hybrid bike. (Don't bring your road bike -- or you'll get road rash and many flat tires on the rocky dirt trail)
- Great Falls Park <http://www.waba.org/>. McLean, Virginia. This is a beautiful park with beautiful trails to hike (not strenuous, but pleasant). Nice thing to do in spring and fall -- take a picnic, then set out on the trails for a little view of some "falls" -- really big rapids -- on the Potomac River. You can walk across from Virginia to Maryland (and, obviously, from Maryland to Virginia) to meet up with the C&O Canal towpath. I've never been to the Maryland side, so don't know where to park there. On your way to or from the park, drive around the neighborhoods and see how the other half-lives. Some of these places are amazing! Lots of diplomats and Saudi Princes, etc. along with the local AOLionnaires.

- Adams Morgan Day <http://www.adamsmorganday.org/>. The festival is very interesting and generally very crowded and held around the first weekend after Labor Day. Sometimes it can get out of control, though, I think they've toned it down the last several years. The Adams Morgan section of town is a very diverse and eclectic international area of town. Restaurants in the neighborhood are wonderful and different (try eating Ethiopian food with your hands while sitting on the floor at one of the three Ethiopian restaurants; I like Meskerem, personally. Mama Ayesha's boasts wonderful kabob type middle-eastern food. Stop by Lauriol Plaza for wonderful South American food and pitchers of margaritas or Sangria on their rooftop or sidewalk outdoor patio – people watching at Sunday Brunch is great fun!). It's a great place to explore with funky shops and interesting people. Beware that parking is horrendous (this is not an exaggeration and can cause much frustration!) and your best bet is to scope out a restaurant with its own parking lot (Lauriol Plaza) or valet parking (many of the restaurants on 18th Street). It's quite a hilly and long walk from the nearby Metro stops, but certainly doable. If you're into nightlife, this area is hopping on Friday and Saturday nights. If you're not, go to dinner before 8 p.m.
- Maryland Renaissance Festival ("Renn Fest", <http://www.rennfest.com/mrf/index.html>) Folks dress up in medieval outfits for this festival – they have jousting, dancing, music, theatre, smoked turkey legs, etc. It's located near Annapolis and runs on weekends and Labor Day from August 25-October 21 (generally similar dates each year). One of my friends loves it so much she goes several times a season! My other friend brings her young kids who get a kick out of the costumes and fantasy.

Favorite Day Trips

Try to do some of this type of stuff when tourists do not overrun the city; not that it won't be crowded anyway.

- Annapolis: Take a tour of the Naval Academy and maybe a boat tour from downtown. Enjoy a nice meal in one of the downtown restaurants and walk along the water and through the shops.
- Walk or Mountain bike along the C&O canal.
- Great Falls Park (Maryland or Virginia side – you can walk from one to the other).
- Virginia Wineries (visit <http://www.virginiawines.org/> to order your Virginia Winery and Tour Guide). Oasis Vineyards also offers the ability to organize a tour by limousine with a group of your friends! Smithsonian Resident Associates also offer the occasional winery tour.

- Atlantic City, NJ - Take in a weekend of gambling at the casinos. Check out special hotel values. Take Amtrak for easy transportation.
- Cape May, NJ - Tour the Victorian town, stay at a quaint bed-and-breakfast.
- Chadds Ford, PA - Tour the Brandywine River Museum just outside Philadelphia with its extensive collection of the Wyeth family's paintings. It hosts some excellent special shows in addition to its permanent collection. The admission fee is reasonable.
- Falling Water, PA - If you're into architecture, plan ahead (reservations a must) to tour this Frank Lloyd Wright creation. Plan a few side trips to keep the long drive from getting too boring.
- Fredericksburg, VA - Tour the historic areas
- Gettysburg, PA – “Four score and seven years ago...”. Visit the historic battlefields and stay in a Bed and Breakfast.
- Hershey, PA - Visit Chocolate Town amusement park and tours. The tour is free, but the park charges admission. The Hershey Hotel is beautiful and also has a wonderful Spa.
- Lancaster and York, PA - Visit the heart of Amish country. You can buy some wonderful produce from roadside stands. Mennonite and Amish stores and restaurants are closed on Sunday, so shop on Saturday. If you get up early on Sunday you can see the Amish in their horse-drawn buggies on their way to church services in neighboring farmhouses. Stop at the Mennonite center to hire a guide to join your driving tour.
- Longwood Gardens, NJ - Visit the conservatory.
- Massanutten Mountain - Take a drive in the country especially when the leaves are their most colorful, without the traffic that will be on Skyline Drive
- Middleburg, VA - Visit this quaint town in the heart of Virginia hunt country. In September they sponsor an Amish Quilt Sale that includes wooden toys and decorative items.
- Old Rag - Enjoy an all day rock scramble near Sperryville, VA, without need for climbing gear.
- Richmond - Tour Virginia's capitol
- Sky Meadows State Park - Take a short ride out I-66 for hiking, camping, or special programs, such as stargazing.

- Skyline Drive and Shenandoah National Park - Drive along the top of the ridge, stop for a short hike or a picnic, or plan a camping trip. Great route to see the fall color, but plan to take off early on a weekday if you want to see the fall colors without bumper-to-bumper traffic. Many area towns, like Front Royal, have Fall Festivals during the peak colors. For backpacking, get camping permits at the park entrance. (Pace yourself; remember most hikes are down hill and you have to come back up.) Trail guides are available in the gift shops; they provide detailed descriptions of trails as well as time and difficulty ratings. There are many wineries, caves, and bed and breakfasts.
- Virginia Civil War Battle Sites - A very large number of historic Civil War battles took place in Virginia. There are too many to list, but look for Manassas, Richmond, Petersburg, Chancellorsville, Fredericksburg, etc.

Favorite Weekend Trips

There is a lot to do within a 3-hour drive from the city. The area is swimming with history and beauty.

- Williamsburg, Virginia: Visit Colonial Williamsburg and go back in time with period reenactors (don't miss Thomas Jefferson if he's speaking anywhere!). Keep in the history mode and visit Jamestown and the Yorktown Battlefields (Jamestown is a MUST see. Be sure to see both the more commercial part and the National Park sites). If you're historied out, visit Busch Gardens (great roller coasters, very clean, nice gardens) or Water Country, USA (huge water theme park – expect a lot of walking and climbing stairs).
- Charlottesville, VA: Monticello, Thomas Jefferson's home, and University of Virginia, designed by TJ himself. Beautiful architecture and surroundings. Stay in a B&B.
- Philadelphia, PA: If you plan ahead, you can visit the Barnes Foundation in suburban Merion, PA. They have a magnificent collection of Impressionist and post-Impressionist paintings that have only recently become readily accessible to the public. <http://www.barnesfoundation.org/>
- New York City: Take Amtrak to New York City for a long weekend. (Actually holiday weekends are great, but check the time limitations for special fares.) It's about a 4-hour ride, and you arrive relaxed and ready to see the Big Apple. Tour all the standard attractions: NBC Studios, Rockefeller Center, Empire State Building, Statue of Liberty, Ellis Island, Radio City Music Hall. Then collapse for a while, to be ready to see a good show or eat an excellent meal. (Or both if you don't need sleep.) Half price Broadway show tickets are available at TKTS on Times Square. Hotels often have special weekend rates. If you decide to drive, plan to leave the car parked the entire time,

since most of the hotels charge every time you take the car out, plus who would drive in NYC anyway? Taxi service is an excellent value, and nearly everything is accessible via subway.

- Harper's Ferry, WV: Go tubing down the Shenandoah and spend some time in history! Walk the hills of the town for some beautiful views of the rivers that come together at the base of the town. Part of the town has been designated a National Park because of its role in John Brown's raid and in the Civil War. There is an excellent film about John Brown that shows every 30 minutes and serves as an introduction to a self-guided walking tour of the town. If you are very ambitious you can cross the river and hike to an overlook (allow 1-1/2 to 2 hours and carry water and snacks). The Appalachian Trail comes through the town, and the headquarters of the AT Conference is located here.

Other Points of Interest and Interesting Things to Do

Life in DC is fast paced, exciting, dynamic. Snooze you lose! Thank goodness there are a lot of free things to do, because the cost of living is high!

Bring your bicycles with you to DC; carry your walking shoes to work. Washington is a "walking town." Get out and enjoy it. This is your year to try new things, see new sights, and taste different food. Be adventurous!

- Thursday night galleries: Many galleries, including the Phillips Collection, are open Thursday nights. You can listen to jazz and have a glass of wine while perusing the impressionists! The galleries along 7th Street NW in the Penn Quarter host 3rd Thursday from 6:00-8:00 pm on the third Thursday of every month (including poetry readings at Starbucks and happy hour specials at a couple of restaurants).
- The Hillwood Museum, Merriweather Post Estate:
<http://www.hillwoodmuseum.org/>. A recently renovated site which is a usually overlooked gem. A huge collection of Faberge and other Russian art from the Post collection. You must make reservations for the tour.
- Botanical Gardens: Check out the seasonal displays of unusual varieties of flowers (chrysanthemums, poinsettias, spring flowers). It's a nice destination for a walk from work, and it's free.
- Take a trip on a mule drawn flatboat with Park Service personnel from Great Falls Park or from the Foundry in Georgetown. (The waterfalls at Great Falls are spectacular after a heavy rain.)
- Bureau of Engraving and Printing: See how your money is made.

- Eastern Market: Hop the Metro to the Eastern Market station on Wednesdays and Sundays and check out the open-air market for breakfast, produce and meat, flowers and plants, jewelry, etc.
- Einstein's Statue at the National Academy of Sciences: Sit in Einstein's lap and get someone to take your picture.
- Embassy events: For concerts at the embassies, check <http://www.embassyseries.com/>. Check the Wednesday food section of the Washington Post for events such as wine tastings. The Smithsonian Associates occasionally co-sponsor events with an embassy (I attended a seminar on Southeast Asian cultures that included a reception at the Embassy of Thailand). Also check the individual embassy web sites if you have a particular interest.
- Folger Shakespeare Library: Just east of the Capitol. Exhibits, gift shop, and theater performances.
- Kennedy Center: See operas, concerts, and plays in beautiful halls. You must hear the National Symphony orchestra at least once. For those who want to experience the Kennedy Center without the (usually) high prices, there are free performances every evening on the Millennium Stage in the Grand Foyer. Check their website at <http://www.kennedy-center.org/> to see what's on the schedule. The Kennedy Center runs a free shuttle bus every 15 minutes between there and the Foggy Bottom /GWU Metro station (Orange and Blue lines). The National Symphony also has free concerts at the Capitol for Labor Day and Independence Day.
- Library of Congress: See the special exhibits displayed in the Great Hall, which is worth a visit by itself.
- Mount Vernon (George Washington's home): Visit in the fall or spring. Get a one-day ticket, or a season pass if you expect to have lots of visitors.
- National Arboretum: Take your friends and enjoy the spring display of azaleas and rhododendrons and the Bicentennial Collection of bonsai trees, reputed to be one of the best in the world.
- National Building Museum: If you are interested in structures and architecture, this is the place.
- National Geographic Headquarters: Check out special exhibits and fantastic photographs on display.
- National Holocaust Museum: Very touching - but not for children.

- Phillips Collection: Excellent private collection of Impressionist art in an intimate setting.
- Pope-Leighey: If you're an architecture buff who likes Frank Lloyd Wright's work, tour the house moved to Woodlawn Plantation to make room for I-66.
- Potomac Mills, Dale City, VA: One of the biggest outlet malls you will find anywhere. Great fashions at very low prices. Spend the day.
- Roosevelt Island: Amble along the short nature trails on an island in the Potomac River right under the National Airport flight path (bike and foot bridge from Rosslyn, or park just off the George Washington Parkway)
- Tyson's Corner Mall: One of the largest malls in the country. All of the names you can imagine.
- U Street Corridor: Located between 11th and 16th Streets NW, on U Street, has a mix of jazz clubs, ethnic nightlife, restaurants, festivals, and shopping every day of the week.
- Union Station: One of the world's most beautifully restored train stations. It still houses Amtrak and commuter trains, but most people go for the shops and food court.
- Vietnam Memorial: Visit both at night and during the day.
- White House*: Ask your Representative's or Senator's office for tickets for the VIP tour which takes place at 8 o'clock in the morning. They each have 5 tickets a day to distribute.
- Biking: Bike on one of the many good trails in the area. The W&OD trail starts in Arlington and goes out nearly to the Blue Ridge. (It's the longest, narrowest park in the area—an old railroad right-of-way.) The Mount Vernon trail starts in Alexandria and goes to Mount Vernon. Also try Four-mile Run Trail. You can even take your bike on the Metro during certain times if you have a permit.

Call (202) 962-1116 for info. You will have to pay a fee and pass a written test on the rules and regulations and safety procedures.

- Classes: Take a class, anything from stained glass to photography to database management to Japanese. Rates are reasonable at the USDA Graduate School and Arlington County Adult Education. Join the Smithsonian Resident Associates (<http://smithsonianassociates.org/>) to take advantage of discounted rates for their lectures, concerts, tours, and classes. Joy of Motion (<http://www.joyofmotion.org/>) offers excellent dance instruction

at their three locations. The Corcoran Gallery offers art classes (<http://www.corcoran.edu/>). For language instruction, check the Alliance Francaise (<http://www.francedc.org/>) or Goethe Institut (<http://www.goethe.de/uk/was/enindex.htm>), among many other resources.

- Discount Shopping: Brave the crowds at Potomac Mills, south of Springfield on I-95. IKEA has cheap, good-looking furniture. There are large outlet malls in Leesburg, VA and Hagerstown, MD. Also try Reading, PA – the whole town is wall-to-wall outlets. It's a full day's excursion, but you can combine it with a weekend trip to Philadelphia or to Amish country. There are also several outlet malls in Williamsburg, VA.
- Free concerts around Washington by the military bands: Check the Weekend section of the Washington Post for times and places. Take your blanket or lawn chair to hear everything from jazz to swing to Sousa. Don't miss the highlight of the summer series is the Army Band's 1812 Overture concert at the Washington Monument sometime in late August. It comes complete with howitzers and the Army Chorus.
- Movies: Catch a movie at Courthouse 8 Cinema at the Courthouse Metro stop on the Orange Line. Check out foreign films at the Key in Georgetown. If you're watching the budget, check out the \$1.50 movies at some of the older theaters, such as at Loehmann's and Bailey's Crossroads. Some still even have big screens. Take in a movie at the Arlington's Cinema and Draft House. Check out the Uptown Cinema—a refurbished Art Deco movie house that has one of the old big screens—across the street from the Cleveland Park Metro on Connecticut Avenue
- Shopping Malls: If you live on the yellow or blue Metro Lines, stop at Pentagon City on the way home for those nights you just don't want to cook. The Food Court has fast food of every sort, and there are many other restaurants in the mall and the nearby Pentagon Centre and Pentagon Row. There is also a multiplex cinema for those rainy/snowy afternoons DC seems to have so many of from December through February. Take your car and visit several other malls in the area: Tyson's (includes Nordstrom and Hecht's department stores), Tyson's II (includes Macy's and Neiman Marcus), Fair Oaks, Springfield Mall, Landover Mall, White Flint Mall. Also across from Tyson's, in the Fairfax Square Building, check out Tiffany's, Fendi, Hermes, and Gucci. Mazza Gallerie at Wisconsin and Western Ave., NW; has upscale stores (Neiman Marcus, Williams Sonoma, etc. – at the Friendship Heights Metro station)
- Skating: Rent skates and join others for winter-time fun at one of the temporary outdoor rinks.

- Skiing: Visit a resort near DC in Pennsylvania, West Virginia, or in western Virginia. Most accommodate all skill levels. White Tail resort has government employee day on Thursdays. BIG discounts!
- Sporting Events: Get your tickets for sporting events from Ticketmaster or the MCI Arena box office for individual sporting events. Sometimes local businesses offer discounts. Go to an Orioles game in Baltimore at Camden Yards.
- Theaters: Check out the Warner Theater, the Kennedy Center, Arena Stage, and the National Theater. The historic Ford's Theater hosts musicals, plays, and special events in addition to tours and memorabilia from Abraham Lincoln.

The Shakespeare Theater (<http://www.shakespearedc.org/>) is located at the Lansburgh. (They also do the Free For All at the Carter Barron Amphitheater every spring.) For all of these theaters and many other venues, you can often get half-price tickets (plus a service charge) at TICKETPlace (<http://www.cultural-alliance.org/tickets/>) at the Old Post Office Pavilion on the day of the show (or on Saturday for Sunday and Monday).

(* Denotes things that children can enjoy)

Political Comedy Shows

- Gross National Product does a show (changes with the current scandal, administration, etc.), which is hysterical, particularly if you follow politics. They also do a "Scandal Tour" of various (in)famous Washington local
- The Capitol Steps: A comedy song troupe that produces funny songs you may hear on local radio. They perform every Friday and Saturday evening at the Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center at 14th Street and Pennsylvania Ave. NW. Very funny! <http://www.capsteps.com/>
- Or, just watch a session of Congress live in the Gallery. It's a hoot! You can get your gallery pass from your Senator or Congressman <http://www.senate.gov/visiting/index.html>. The real action takes place in the committee hearings in surrounding office buildings. See the daily newspapers for times and locations.
- Not Necessarily Political Comedy: DC has an Improv, if you want to see real live national acts. There is a huge variety and you could hit on a good one. Watch their ad in the Post Weekend Section or on their Web site: <http://www.dcimprov.com/>

Views of the City

- Hains Point at East Potomac Park: Bring a picnic and sit near “The Awakening” a breathtaking sculpture, which appears to be a giant coming up through the Earth. From here you can watch the planes take off and land from National Airport and have a unique view of the city and river.
- Key Bridge Marriott: Upscale restaurant, but a lovely view of the city at night from a tall perspective.
- Navy-Marine Memorial: Another picnic destination to see the city from another perspective. The statue is of seagulls and waves and is dedicated to those lost at sea. It’s a very special memorial and a lovely place to sit on a bench on the Potomac. It’s located on the George Washington Memorial Parkway (if you’re coming from DC across the 14th Street Bridge it’s on the right hand side if you take the Parkway exit).
- Top of the Hotel Washington [<http://www.hotelwashington.com/>; Pennsylvania & 15th Street, N.W]: May through October, the Hotel Washington has an open-air rooftop café (Sky Terrace), which offers a stunning view of the Ellipse/Mall and White House. This is probably one of the few good views in town, as there is a statute, which limits the heights of buildings so that they are not higher than the Capital building. (Notice how the buildings in Virginia/Rosslyn/Crystal City are towering, while, on the DC side, they are not very high). This café is a wonderful and romantic place to watch the sunset on an early Fall Evening. They have a light menu (not spectacular, but you can get a plate of fruit and cheese to enjoy with a nice glass of wine).
- Old Post Office Tower [<http://www.nps.gov/opot/>]: Great view of this city from the Clock Tower – one of the few views available with the Washington Monument in it! It’s free. This is one of the best-kept secrets in DC. The Old Post Office Pavilion is a bit of a disappointment of stores and food court, but the tower is a great destination.
- Washington Harbor: Great people watching and outdoor dining here at the Georgetown Potomac. Sequoia has a Friday night meet market happy hour (great people watching), but is a lovely place to watch the boats go by on the river and look at the Kennedy Center and Key Bridge from the water. Tony and Joe’s has a great Sunday buffet brunch.

Special Events

Check the paper for events, but look for the following in particular:

Date	Event	Description
August	Arlington County Fair	Visit booths of local businesses, charities, and government offices; enjoy

		ethnic food examine blue ribbon arts and crafts, as well as garden produce.
September	Virginia State Fair*	Take a day to visit the see the animals, toss the rings, and ride the ferris wheels.
September	Maryland Seafood Festival	Enjoy a seafood feast and day of fun at Sandy Point State Park near Annapolis
September	Occoquon, VA, Craft Show	Get there before it officially opens to get a parking place and a chance to look before the crowds' gridlock. Free entry (10,000 visitors over 2 days).
September	Open House at the National Cathedral*	Get there early because tickets for the bell tower tour are very limited. It's a climb, but the view from the highest point in the city is worth it. The bell ringing society demonstrates change ringing, and you can also see the carillon. They also have artisans demonstrating stone carving, wrought iron work, stained glass, and other arts, which went into building the cathedral. Shop at the two gift shops on the grounds of the cathedral, and check out the greenhouse specializing in herbs.
First weekend in October	Waterford, VA Craft Festival and Open House	Visit the town – a designated National Historic Area – during its fundraising project to rescue surrounding areas from encroaching development and to restore public areas. Only the finest craft persons demonstrate and show their wares. They are spread from one end of town to the other. The other part of the fair is the tour of homes, which is included in the price of the ticket. Some of the homes date from the late 1700's and early 1800's

October	Taste of DC	Music and local restaurants and vendors are on hand to share their good food, merchandise, and talent. http://www.washington.org/taste/
Fall	Black Caucus	The annual Congressional Black Caucus discusses African American political social and economic issues. Contains a variety of lectures seminars and parties and provides a nationwide networking opportunity.
First Sunday in Advent and Easter	Messiah Sing Along at Clarendon, (VA) Methodist Church	Not the NSO, but easier to get in, and the musicians are professional; join the social afterwards.
December	Christmas Open House at the National Cathedral	Check out the demonstrations and hands-on things for children to do.
December	Messiah Sing Along with the NSO at Kennedy Center	Indulge your fantasy of singing with the professionals. Watch for distribution of free tickets a few weeks in advance, and get there early because they go fast.
March, April	Cherry Blossoms	Arrive early (around 7:30 a.m.) and remember that a late freeze or a good rain and windstorm can destroy them overnight. Don't assume they'll bloom for the Cherry Blossom Parade.
May	Art Festival	Art Festival on the Annapolis Waterfront.
July	Smithsonian Folklife Festival	Join the crowds on the Mall for entertainment and interesting food.
July	Fireworks	Join the crowds on the Mall for a concert followed by fireworks, or stake out a claim across the river in VA and watch without being covered with ashes. Or enjoy one of the smaller displays in the suburbs

DINING

Favorite Restaurants

Dining in the DC area can be a sublime experience. There are fantastic restaurants representing any type of cuisine you desire throughout the area. The best of them are listed in the Washingtonian's 100 Very Best Restaurant issue each year. Their Best Bargain issue is also a great place to start. Check out the current edition of the Zagat Guide, too. Here is a short list of favorites from this year's class.

- Andale, Downtown DC (Penn Quarter): Upscale contemporary Mexican.
- Café Atlantico, Downtown DC (Penn Quarter): Nuevo Latin American. Try the Latin American dim sum brunch on weekends.
- California Pizza Kitchen, Tyson's Corner Center and Pentagon Centre: OK, so it's a chain. But when you absolutely *must* have a Thai chicken pizza, this is the place.
- Capitol Grille, 601 Pennsylvania Ave. NW (DC), and other locations: Steak and seafood; expensive. Other steakhouses in the area include The Caucus Room, Nick & Stef's, and Ruth's Chris Steak House.
- Jaleo, Downtown DC (Penn Quarter): Spanish – tapas, paella.
- Marrakesh, New York Ave NW, Washington, DC: Moroccan, excellent food and belly dancers; reservations essential. More fun with a group.
- The Melting Pot, 1220 19th Street NW, DC: Fondue
- Ten Penh at 10th Street & Pennsylvania Ave. NW, DC: Trendy Pacific Rim cuisine.
- ThaiPhoon (Dupont Circle and Pentagon Row): Excellent, inexpensive Thai.

Restaurants Recommended By Former Program Participants

This list has not been checked to make sure these places are still in business, offering the same type of cuisine, or in their original locations. Call ahead or ask around.

- 219, Old Town, Alexandria, VA: A 3 level restaurant; lower level is a bar, middle level is a sit-down restaurant atmosphere with outdoor seating (a heated area on cool days), and upper level is a jazz club/restaurant. Jazz

starts at 9 p.m. Great entertainment. Suggestions for dining in the jazz club include a superb “219 Filet Mignon” and “Seafood Linguini”

- 701 Restaurant, 700 Pennsylvania Ave (Archive Metro): Upscale.
- Abi, Columbia Pike, Arlington, VA: Salvadoran, try pupusas, corn tamale.
- American Café, Washington, DC, Tyson’s Corner & other locations: American.
- Angkor Wat, McLean, VA: Cambodian, excellent soups.
- Anita’s, 521 E Maple & 147 W Maple, Vienna, VA & other locations: Mexican, New Mexico cuisine; inexpensive; carne adovada is great.
- Apian Way, Seven Corners, VA: Greek.
- Atlacatl, 2716 N Washington Blvd. Arlington, VA: Salvadoran.
- “B” Smith’s Restaurant in Union Station: Good food, jazz combo during weekends in the evening.
- Bella Italiano, Washington Blvd. Arlington, VA: Italian.
- Bellissimo, Downtown Fairfax, VA: Fine Italian food with great service. Small, white-tablecloth restaurant. The owner is very friendly and goes out of his way to make you feel at home. Good special occasion restaurant (\$100+/couple minimum with a nice bottle of wine, appetizer, main course, dessert)
- Boston Chicken, Willston Shopping Center, Rte 50, Falls Church, VA: American, simple, cheap roasted chicken; excellent corn bread.
- Bullfeathers, King Street, Old Town Alexandria: Pub.
- Cafe Burma, Capitol Hill: German.
- Cafe Dalat, Wilson Blvd., Arlington (Clarendon Metro): Vietnamese.
- Cafe Paris Express, 4520 Lee Hwy. (@ Old Dominion) Arlington, VA: French, quick, inexpensive specials of the day.
- Cafe Saigon, 1135 N Highland St., Arlington, VA (1 block from Clarendon Metro): Vietnamese, try flambe bananas.

- Cafe Taj, 1379 Beverly Rd (@ Old Dominion), McLean, VA: Indian, excellent, elegant.
- Capitol City Brewing Co.: 12th and H, NW: Microbrewery.
- Caribbean Grill, Lee Highway at George Mason Drive Arlington, VA: Cuban and Jamaican, try the empanadas.
- City Lights, 1731 Connecticut Ave: Chinese.
- Clyde's Restaurants: Alexandria, VA, Georgetown, DC, Tyson's Corner, VA, Reston Town Center, VA, Chevy Chase, MD, Columbia, MD. Local restaurant group that does a fine job of serving fresh, reasonably priced food at different price ranges (high end entrees in the \$25 range, but sandwiches in the \$6-\$10 range). The atmosphere and décor of each restaurant is unique and thematic – fun to see the differences. Never a bad meal, and always good service. Excellent raw bar.
- Other restaurants owned by the group are also worth visiting: 1789 Restaurant in Georgetown (a renovated Federal-style townhouse and renowned American food – coat and tie a must); Old Ebbitt Grill near the White House (great location – ask for seating in the atrium and ask the bartender to explain the heritage of the bar); Tomato Palace in Columbia; or the Tombs in Georgetown (a longtime Georgetown student drinking and dining establishment). Check them out at www.clydes.com
- Copeland's, Alexandria, VA (King Street exit from I-395) or Centreville, VA (Rt. 29): Authentic New Orleans Cuisine (New Orleans based chain). Entrées run around \$25 at dinner.
- Crisp & Juicy, 4540 Lee Hwy @ Old Dominion, Arlington, VA: Peruvian, carryout charbroiled chicken and side orders.
- Crystal Thai, 4819 N First St. (Arlington Forest Shopping Center off Rte 50): Thai, try the cinnamon beef.
- Cuzco Restaurant, 5831 Columbia Pike, Falls Church VA: Peruvian, entertainment on weekends.
- Delhi Dhaba, 2424 Wilson Blvd., Arlington (nr Court House Metro): Indian, cafeteria-style.
- Dominique, Pennsylvania Ave, Washington, DC: French, check out before theater menu.

- East Wind, King St., Old Town Alexandria: Vietnamese, try after-dinner hazelnut liqueur.
- El Caribe, 3288 M St., NW, Georgetown: Hispanic, try paella, fried plantains (ripe).
- El Torito's, Tyson's Corner, VA; Greenbelt, MD, DC Waterfront: Mexican, chain. Dishes with tomatillo sauce are good.
- Enriquetta's, 2811 M St., NW: Mexican, the best Mexican food, according to the most demanding Mexican Food experts.
- Fedora Cafe, Leesburg Pike, Tyson's Corner: Continental.
- Filomena Ristorante, 1063 Wisconsin Ave, NW (Georgetown): Italian.
- Fish Market, 105 King St., Old Town Alexandria: Seafood.
- Five Guys, 4626 King St., Alexandria (@ Walter Reed Dr., nr Baileys Crossroads): American, take-out only; best hamburger in the area.
- Food Factory, 4221 N Fairfax Drive (enter from rear) Arlington, VA: Pakistani, noisy hole-in-the-wall; cheap; excellent naan, haleem.
- Forbidden City, 6657 Old Dominion Dr., McLean, VA: Chinese, excellent; good service.
- Fortune, 5900 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church (Baileys Crossroads): Chinese, excellent Chinese seafood, dim sum.
- Fuddruckers, 6201 Arlington Blvd, Falls Church; 4300 Backlick Rd., Annandale (& others): American, chain; Large burgers which you dress yourself; great malts; can be noisy.
- Fuji, 77 N Glebe Road (@ US 50), Arlington, VA: Korean and Japanese, try bulgogi, bibimbop; sushi available.
- Georgia Brown's, 1500 K St, NW: Upscale soul food.
- Ghin Na Ree, 2509 N Harrison St (@ Lee Hwy) Arlington, VA: Thai, try spicy bean threads, basil beef.
- Gourmet Vietnam, 3211 N Washington Blvd (nr Clarendon Metro), Arlington: Vietnamese.

- Restaurants in the local Great American Restaurant Group
<http://www.greatamericanrestaurants.com/gmp.htm>.

Like the Clyde's group, these are well run, with good service and great food. Carlyle Grand in Shirlington, VA: Consistently appears on the Washingtonian's 100 Very Best Restaurant list and for good reason.

- Haandi, 1222 W Broad St., Falls Church, VA: Indian, excellent, elegant.
- Hard Times Cafe, 1404 King St., Old Town Alexandria: American.
- Hogs on the Hill, Georgia Ave and other locations in DC: American, excellent, large portions of BBQ.
- House of Fortune, McLean, VA: Chinese.
- Hunan #1, 3033 Wilson Blvd., Arlington (nr Clarendon Metro): Chinese, excellent; dim sum on weekends.
- India Curry House, 305 N Glebe Road, Arlington: Indian, good biryani.
- Inn at Little Washington, Washington, VA: About a 70-mile drive from "Big" Washington through beautiful farmland, this world-renowned restaurant and inn is worth both the drive and the cost. This restaurant consistently wins the highest awards in the nation and worldwide – this is not a fluke! The food is artwork both in taste and presentation, and the service is unparalleled. Expect to pay at least \$200/person on a weekend including tax/tip/bottle of wine shared. Worth every penny and more.
- Ireland's Own, Old Town Alexandria: Irish Pub.
- Istanbul Cafe, Van Dorn Shopping Center: Turkish, fancy, but not expensive.
- Kabul Caravan, 1725 Wilson Blvd., Arlington (4 blocks from Rosslyn Metro): Afghan, try aushak, qwabile palau, pumpkin in yogurt.
- King Street Blues, N of King St. on St. Asaphs, Old Town Alexandria: Home cooking.
- Le Steak, M St, Georgetown: French.
- Lebanese Taverna, 5900 N Washington Blvd, Arlington, VA: Lebanese, best middle-East food in area; excellent pizza too, though you may have to wait.
- Little Viet Garden, 3012 Wilson Blvd, Arlington, VA (near Clarendon Metro): Vietnamese.

- Machupiccho, 3263 M St., NW: Peruvian.
- McCormicks and Schmicks, 1652 K St., NW, Phone: 202 861-2233: Seafood.
- Meskerem, 2434 18th St, NW (Adams Morgan) Washington: Ethiopian, try zilizil tibs.
- Mick's, Washington Circle (near Foggy Bottom Metro): American, try for after theater desserts.
- Mrs. K's Toll House, Silver Spring, MD: A very elegant, yet simple restaurant with all-inclusive pricing.
- Nathan's Restaurant in Georgetown ("M" & Wisconsin Ave): Good food & service oriented.
- Negril, 7904 Woodmont Ave, Bethesda, MD, (Near Bethesda Metro Station): Jamaican, try jerk chicken or fish.
- Occidental Grill, Pennsylvania Ave, Washington, DC: Continental.
- Orleans House, Rosslyn: American, succulent Prime Rib.
- Panjshir, 924 W Broad St, Falls Church: Afghan.
- Peking Gourmet, Leesburg Pike, Baileys Crossroads, Falls Church, VA: Chinese, try the Peking Duck..
- Pho 75, 1711 N Wilson Blvd, Arlington, VA, or Rte 50 across from Loehmann's Plaza, Falls Church: Vietnamese, dozens of varieties of beef noodle soup, very inexpensive meals.
- Pho Cali, 1621 S Walter Dr @ Glebe Rd Arlington, VA: Vietnamese, excellent seafood.
- Pilin, W Broad St, Falls Church, VA: Thai, go for the catfish!
- Queen Bee, 3181 Wilson Blvd, Arlington (Clarendon): Vietnamese.
- Red Sage, 605 14th St. NW, DC: Southwestern, excellent, distinctive, sweet sauces; everything made with peppers, including ancho ice cream (highly recommended).
- Red Sea, 18th St NW (Adams Morgan), Washington: Ethiopian, try zilizil tibs.

- Red, Hot & Blue, 1600 Wilson Blvd, Arlington (2 blocks from Rosslyn Metro) or 3014 Wilson Blvd (1 block from Clarendon Metro) or Laurel, MD: American, great Memphis BBQ; try onion loaf if with a crowd; Clarendon mainly for carry-out.
- Rio Grande, 4301 N Fairfax Drive, Arlington, VA, (Near Ballston Metro), Reston, VA; Bethesda, MD: Mexican, watch the tortilla maker at work; try goat on Thurs; best Mexican.
- Russia House, 790 Station St, Herndon, VA: Russian, rich food, expensive.
- Ruth's Chris Bethesda, MD: Excellent food, classy, expensive but worth it.
- Samadi Sweet Shop, Leesburg Pike, Baileys Crossroads, Falls Church, VA: Lebanese, try 31 varieties of Baklava.
- Sang Rok Su, 2500 Columbia Pike, Arlington, VA: Korean, try the kimbop.
- Sequoia, 3000 K St., NW: International, try the pasta dishes. Beautiful view of the waterfront.
- Szechuan Express, 5845 N Washington Blvd, Arlington, VA: Chinese, take-out.
- Taco Baja, 3136F Arlington Blvd (@ Patrick Henry Dr) Seven Corners, VA: Mexican, simple fast food with variety.
- Tom Sarris New Orleans House, Fort Meyer Drive, Rosslyn: American, inexpensive, large portions of prime rib.
- Tony and Joe's, 3000 K St, NW: Seafood, good view of the Washington Harbor.
- Tortilla Factory, 648 Elden St, Herndon, VA: Mexican, excellent, Carne asada.
- Virginia Beverage Company, King St., Old Town Alexandria: Brewpub, on-site brewed beers and liquors, Great scallops.
- Wok and Roll, 1371 Beverly Rd (@ Old Dominion) McLean, VA: Chinese, fast food.
- Woo Lae Oak, 1500 S. Joyce St., Arlington, VA: Korean, beautiful decor, excellent food.

Least Favorite Restaurants

There are bombs everywhere, but most of us couldn't think of them. Be sure to read Eve Zibart's column in the Post's Friday Weekend Section and Tom Sietsema's (the real food critic at the Post) in Sunday's Washington Post Magazine to help guide you.

- McDonalds, everywhere: Fast food restaurant with few redeeming characteristics. Even the bathrooms aren't clean anymore! The food never looks like the photos on the wall. (About \$5 per person).
- Silver Diner, various suburban locations, usually close to shopping areas. "Diner" style chain serving the worst processed food. The wait can be horrid. They do have great chocolate malts. For a REAL diner alternative, try "Tastee 29 Diner" in Fairfax or "Bob and Edith's Diner" in Arlington.

Best Places to Picnic

- Haines Point at the Awakening statue: The statue is the best kept secret in Washington – looks like an enormous guy coming out of the Earth with a really bad hangover. The location on the water and unique view of the city is awesome. Nice at sunset. Wolf Trap: Bring a picnic and have dinner under the stars while watching a great live performance.
- The Mall on the 4th of July (if you don't mind crowds)
- The top of the Kennedy Center on the 4th of July, if you don't mind crowds. No tickets required. Call before going, due to 9/11 it had been canceled.
- Roof of Headquarters in the fall or spring
- Tailgating at Gold Cup <http://www.vagoldcup.com/>: Steeplechase racing at Great Meadow, in The Plains, Virginia on the first weekend in May (and, again, the third weekend in October). The biggest party of the year! Also go to tailgate at the Friday Night Polo matches, every Friday night during the summer. <http://www.greatmeadow.com/>

Best Places to Purchase Picnic Food

- Sutton Place Gourmet: AMAZING food and wine selection with beautiful produce.
- The microbrew section is very good, as well. The prepared food can be really good, but bring your plastic – it can get really expensive!
- Fresh Fields/Whole Market; ditto, Sutton Place

- Someplace Special (Giant – McLean)
- Dean & DeLuca (Georgetown)
- Hot Dog carts throughout the city –try the half-smokes
- Trader Joe's: Great selection of cheeses and wines at great prices

OTHER

Radio Stations

Go to <http://www.geocities.com/Hollywood/Bungalow/5014/wdcfm.html> to get a list of stations available, with opinionated comments.

Best:

- 107.7 WTOP: All News. Traffic and Weather at 10-minute intervals (every 8 – e.g. 10:08, 10:18...).
- 105.9 WJZW: Smooth Jazz
- 91.9 WGTS: Christian
- 102.3: Oldies (Motown and the like)
- 94.7 WARW: Classic Rock
- 103.5 WGMS: Classical
- 90.9 WETA: National Public Radio
- 103.1 WRNR: Progressive Rock

Worst:

- 107.7 WTOP: Too many commercials, too much fluff.
- 106.7 WJFK: Unless you like juvenile, slapstick potty humor.
- 97.1 WASH: Smarmy, cheesy DJs.
- 99.5 WITH: Top 40 – All Britney all the time.
- 99.1 WHFS: Only bad because it's hard to get signal in Northern VA; Alternative.

Local TV News Stations

Best:

- Channel 4: Best Weather and Sports
- Channel 7: Pretty good Weather and Sports

Worst:

- Channel 9: Cheesy Reporters and Anchors

**Merri Anne Stowe updated this chapter.
Please contact her at (321) 476-3613 for more information.**

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